In the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 14, line 5 with:

One potentially serious issue with using a SIL in a scanning optical system is the possibility of damage to the SIL or to the DUT during the scanning. The final lens element in the SIL must be in intimate contact with the DUT (any gap must be much smaller than 1 micron). FIG. 6a illustrates the SIL geometry, wherein SIL 600 has a back surface which is substantially semispherical with a radius of curvature, and has a front face having a fairly large area, which has a radius of curvature much larger than that of the back surface, and is in intimate contact with DUT 114. A known method for minimizing damage to a lens is a "duck and cover" scheme which has been implemented in the IDS2500I probe system manufactured by NPTest, which utilizes a conventional LSM and a short-distance liquid immersion lens. When the optical system is moved relative to the sample, e.g., for locating the desired spot on the DUT to be imaged, the lens is retracted from the sample before moving. This method could be utilized for an SIL application in a scanning optical system as described herein, by: 1) retracting the SIL in z, i.e., perpendicular to the sample surface, 2) moving the optical column laterally, then; 3) moving the SIL back in z to contact the sample. This process would be repeated for each pixel in the image, which would be a time-consuming process if the z-stage were utilized to move the lens.